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UNCLAS KHARTOUM 001791

SENSITIVE  
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STATE FOR R JCURTAIN, AF/FO, AF/PDPA FOR PEHRNMAN, R/A FOR JMOYES,  
ECA-IIP/EX/G, AF/SPG, ECA FOR MCROUCH AND RBRADLEY, ECA/A/E/AF,  
ECA/PE/V/R/N, ECA/PE/V/, OIG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [SCUL](#) [OEXC](#) [ASIG](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: IVLP COUNTRY ALLOCATON FOR SUDAN: REQUEST INCREASE

REF: A) STATE 114917, B) STATE 022899, C) KHARTOUM 001739, D)  
KHARTOUM 001753, E)KHARTOUM UNCLAS 001781

¶1. (SBU) Summary: By geographic area, Sudan is the largest country in Africa. It has a population of over 40 million, and due to the terrible humanitarian and political crises in Darfur plus the importance of reaping peace dividends through implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ending Africa's longest civil war, Sudan is the USG's highest policy priority on the continent. There is an opportunity right now in Sudan, with the country's first nation-wide elections scheduled for 2009 and a crucial referendum on southern Sudan's possible independence in 2011, to use the IVLP to tremendous advantage for U.S. national security interests at a pivotal moment in Sudan's history. Last year, the post submitted twenty IVLP nominees. ECA approved a final slate of only eight. Post is requesting that figure be doubled for FY-2009, for a total slate of sixteen. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The International Visitor Leadership Program is normally one of a range of exchange offerings at post by the Bureau of Educational Affairs (ECA). In Sudan, however, IVLP is the premier exchange program, as the Fulbright Program, Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowships and Youth Programs Division are not currently open to Sudan through ECA. In the 1980s, when the U.S. had strong bilateral relations with Sudan, the IVLP reflected the latter in the large numbers of grantees who traveled to the United States. Over the years, Sudanese returnees rose to influential positions in critical fields and regions (southern Sudan and Darfur among them.) When the bilateral relationship soured in the 1990s, however, those numbers declined precipitously.

¶3. (U) The closure of our Embassy from 1995 to 2002 due to security reasons resulted in lost IVLP opportunities to influence a generation of future Sudanese leaders. When the U.S. Embassy reopened in 2003, the IVLP remained a shadow of what it had once been. This has been true despite the enormous opportunities the Comprehensive Peace Agreement affords the Mission in putting together slates that truly reflect Sudan's political, economic, racial, ethnic and religious diversity.

¶4. (U) There is an opportunity right now in Sudan, with the country's first nation-wide elections scheduled for 2009 and a crucial referendum on southern Sudan's possible independence in 2011, to use the IVLP to tremendous advantage for U.S. national security interests at a pivotal moment in Sudan's history. Last year, post submitted twenty nominations. ECA approved a final slate of just eight. Post is seeking to double that figure in FY-2009, for a total slate of sixteen.

¶5. (U) During Sudan's 2007 inspection, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recognized the importance of the IVLP when it noted: "The post is eager to expand its International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). It has nominated ten candidates for FY 2007, but it is unclear how many slots will be funded. The post has been active in debriefing visitors and, in December 2006, re-created a mission-wide IVLP selection committee. Despite these efforts,

funding for Sudan's IVLP has remained flat."

¶6. (U) The Mission is committed to resuscitating this crucial program and to nominating the very best and most promising candidates. IVs from southern Sudan and from the Three Areas (Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei) would help work toward balanced development in Sudan. Yet, if our numbers remain at under ten grantees a year, such efforts will not be nearly enough to make a difference here. With an increase in the country allotment for Sudan, ECA can assist in paving the way for the next generation of leaders in Sudan.

¶7. (U) Before departing post on annual leave, CDA Fernandez approved this request.

ASQUINO